GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2472
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2001
INDIA` S STAND ON AFGHAN WAR
AJAY CHAKRABORTY;AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA;CHANDRA NATH SINGH;JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA;RAMESH CHENNITHALA;SHEELA GAUTAM;SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN;SURESH KURUP;VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

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(a) whether after air strikes the Government of India was approached by the U.S. to support their stand against terrorism and attack in Afghanistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; (

(c) the response of the Government thereto;

(d) whether the Government have any proposal to allow the USA to use Indian facilities for their operations in Afghanistan;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether India has given a go by to non-alignment policy by aligning with USA in Afghan war;
(g) if so, the reasons therefor; and
(h) the role the Government propose to play in the formation of post-Taliban regime in Afghanistan?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a) & (b) Government has consistently taken a principled stand against terrorism and its sponsors everywhere in the world and supports all international efforts, including in the United Nations, to combat terrorism. Following the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, the U.S. Government sought assistance in the form of intelligence on terrorist groups, cooperation in investigations into the terrorist attacks, freezing of financial assets in India, if any, of Specially Designated Global Terrorists, and support for `Operation Enduring Freedom` against the Taliban and the Al Qaida network in Afghanistan.

(c), (d) and (e) Besides intelligence sharing and cooperation in the investigations into the terrorist attacks on September 11, Government has offered, on the basis of specific requests by the United States, assistance for the `Operation Enduring Freedom` in conformity with the existing guidelines for such clearances requested by friendly countries. These are overflight, landing and refuelling facilities for U.S. air missions and port calls by naval ships in support of the campaign in Afghanistan. The assistance approved by Government does not cover provision of military bases in India to the United States or participation in combat operations in any form.

(f) and (g) Government has consistently advocated that terrorism is a global problem that requires a comprehensive international response targeted against terrorism and its sponsors everywhere in the world. It is also well established that the Taliban and the Al Qaeda network have links with terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir. Government`s support to the ongoing military campaign against the Taliban and Al Qaeda network in Afghanistan is, therefore, in keeping with India`s national interest and does not represent a shift from the well-established principles of India`s foreign policy.

(h) Government is actively engaged in the international consultation mechanism for the political settlement and economic reconstruction in Afghanistan. Government is in touch with various sections of the Afghan society, both in and outside Afghanistan. Government has announced humanitarian assistance of one million tonnes of wheat as well as medicines for the Afghan people and has announced a line of credit of U.S. $ 100 million for the economic reconstruction of Afghanistan. A team of doctors and liaison officers has been sent to Kabul to assist in humanitarian efforts and maintain contacts with the Afghan people. Internationally, besides bilateral consultations with concerned countries, India has also participated in the meeting of G-21 countries in New York and in a meeting of a select group of countries in Washington on 20 November 2001 to discuss economic aid to Afghanistan. India is among the seventeen countries invited to Bonn as observers of the talks between the various Afghan factions for a political solution, which started on 27 November 2001.